

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 144 878

SO 010 318

TITLE The Organisation of Education in Ireland during 1974-1976 and Major Trends in Educational Development 1974-1976.

INSTITUTION Department of Education, Dublin (Ireland).

PUB DATE [77]

NOTE 24p.; Not available in hard copy from EDRS due to poor reproducibility of original document; Report presented at International Conference on Education (36th, Geneva, Switzerland, August 30-September 8, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Community Education; *Comparative Education; Educational Administration; *Educational Development; Educational Finance; *Educational History; *Educational Policy; Educational Practice; Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; Government Role; Higher Education; Reports; Special Education; Teacher Education; Vocational Education

IDENTIFIERS *Ireland

ABSTRACT

This publication examines the educational system of Ireland. It discusses the system's legal basis in the Irish Constitution, structure, attendance requirements, primary and secondary school programs, teacher education, special education programs for the physically and mentally handicapped, vocational schools, religious and community schools, school finance, universities, and some major trends in education from 1974-76. Community schools, one recent feature of the Irish educational system, provide comprehensive secondary education for all 12-19 year old pupils in a given area and also make facilities available for adult education and community development projects. Other developments since 1974 include progressive reduction of the pupil/teacher ratio in primary schools, provision of individual curriculum of studies on the secondary level, addition of two colleges to the university system, expansion of special education programs, and creation of 19 teacher's centers to aid inservice teacher training. (Author/DB)

* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *

ED144878

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

UNESCO - International Bureau of Education

The Organisation of Education

in Ireland during

1974-1976

and

Major Trends in Educational Development

1974-1976

Brief Report

prepared by

The Department of Education,

Dublin, Ireland.

58 010 318

The Organisation of Education in Ireland

1. Brief account of legal basis and administrative responsibility for education.

The Irish Constitution recognises that parents are free to provide for the education of their children "in their homes or in private schools or in schools recognised or established by the State". Parents may not be compelled in violation of their conscience to send their children to any particular type of school but the State as guardian of the common good must see that the children receive a certain minimum education.

To this end the Department of Education provides for education free of charge in primary and second level schools and it gives substantial aid to Universities and other institutions of third-level education. Education at the primary level is given, for the great majority of children, in State-supported schools. The second-level system broadly includes:-

- (a) secondary schools for pupils of age range 12 to 19 years,
- (b) comprehensive schools and community schools for pupils of age range 12 to 19 years,
- (c) vocational schools for pupils of age range 12 to 19 years, and
- (d) regional technical colleges for pupils of age range 15 to 19 years.

The Department of Agriculture is responsible for agricultural education in certain second-level schools: these schools do not come within the jurisdiction of the Department of Education.

School Attendance

Attendance at schools is compulsory for children between the ages of six and fifteen years. Children may be enrolled in primary schools at the age of four years and while the general age range in primary schools is five to twelve years the number of children commencing school at four years of age is increasing. The majority of pupils transfer to second-level schools at about twelve years of age. The normal duration of the second-level course of study is five years, consisting of a three years' Junior Course and a two years' Senior Course.

2. Primary Education

The schools are in practice denominational in character and denominationally controlled at local management level, though no child may be refused enrolment in any school in which there is accommodation available, on the grounds of religion. The schools receive equal freedom and equal support from the State, without reference to the denomination with which managerial control lies. The State contributes the major portion of the cost of primary education and at the same time exercises a large measure of control over its operation. The cost of building, equipping, renovating and maintaining the schools is met by substantial State grants, supplemented by local contributions. The State pays the salaries of the teachers in full. The Department of Education exercises control over the work of the schools by setting the educational programme, by prescribing the qualifications of the teachers and by assessing teaching competence - in this latter regard the work of the teachers is regularly inspected by the Inspectors of the Department. The Government of the school is the responsibility of the local managerial authority who appoint the teachers on individual contracts subject to

approval by the Department of Education of the teacher's qualifications. Teachers are trained in Colleges of Education recognised by the Department of Education. Standards of entry to these Colleges are laid down by the Department of Education.

Special Education

Within the general framework of the system of primary education special provision is made for handicapped and deprived children in special schools which are recognised on the same basis as primary schools, in special classes attached to ordinary schools, and in certain voluntary centres where educational services appropriate to the needs of the children are provided. Categories of handicapped children catered for include visually handicapped, hearing impaired, physically handicapped, mentally handicapped, emotionally disturbed, itinerants and other disadvantaged children (including delinquents). Provision is also being made on an increasing scale for children with dual or multiple handicaps. In each case a programme suited to the needs of the particular kind of handicap is provided and new school buildings are planned to cater for the special educational requirements of the handicapped child. The number of children in each class is very much smaller than in ordinary classes in primary schools and because of the extensive catchment areas for these schools an extensive system of school transport has been developed. At second level the handicapped children may in some instances depending on the nature of the handicap and on other circumstances continue their education in the special school in which they have followed the primary course.

In addition to the services provided on a full-time basis many children are catered for through part-time teaching facilities in hospitals, child guidance clinics, rehabilitation workshops, centres for delinquents, special "Saturday-morning" centres and home teaching schemes.

Teachers in special schools, classes etc., must initially have the basic teaching qualifications required for the level in which they are engaged. In addition, there are one year post-graduate courses leading to the Diploma in Special Education and to the Diploma for Teachers of Hearing Impaired Children and where facilities are not available in Ireland for specialist teacher training in relation to other forms of handicap (e.g. for the education of blind children) teachers are sent abroad to take suitable specialist courses.

In-service courses on remedial education and short courses, seminars, workshops etc. on various aspects of education for the handicapped and disadvantaged are organised by the Department of Education in conjunction with the various educational, medical and voluntary organisations involved.

3. Second-Level Schools

(a) Voluntary Secondary schools

Voluntary secondary schools are private institutions conducted by boards of governors, religious communities or individuals, but the Department of Education gives considerable financial assistance through grants in respect of each eligible pupil and the payment of over 85% of the salaries of the staff of the schools. The State also contributes 80% of the cost of building and equipping secondary schools. A capitation grant is paid to all secondary schools in respect of each recognised pupil. In addition a special supplemental grant is paid in respect of each recognised pupil to all schools which do not charge tuition fees, and under this arrangement all but a very small percentage of secondary schools offer free education. The programme of instruction is prescribed by the Department and the schools are inspected regularly by Department Inspectors. In order to qualify for official

registration, teachers must be University graduates who have taken a Higher Diploma in Education, or must hold recognised teaching diplomas awarded as a result of training courses in Colleges of Art, of Domestic Science or of Physical Education, or in institutions where approved courses are provided for the training of teachers of woodwork and metalwork. There were in 1975/76 9,830 full-time secondary teachers in receipt of incremental salary.

(b) Vocational Schools

These schools, in addition to providing the ordinary second-level programme of instruction for pupils in the age range 12 to 15 years, make available specialised technical training for particular trades or professions as well as evening courses for adults in a very wide variety of subjects. The schools in each local administrative area are under the management of a Vocational Education Committee elected by and representative of the local authority for the area. The educational programmes provided by the Committees are subject to the sanction and control of the Department of Education which provides some ninety per cent of the total cost of vocational education by way of grants from State funds, the balance being met from the funds of the local authority. Vocational teachers form two major categories: teachers of general subjects, who must be university graduates; and teachers of specialist subjects who must hold recognised teaching diplomas awarded as a result of their having successfully completed training courses in Colleges of Art, of Domestic Science, or of Physical Education, or in institutions where approved courses are provided for the training of teachers of woodwork and metalwork. More than half the Vocational

teachers are in the latter category. There were 4,279 full-time teachers working in vocational schools at the second level in 1975/76.

(c) Comprehensive Schools

In addition to secondary and vocational schools a number of comprehensive schools have been established in the second-level sector. They are managed by Committees, the members of which represent the diocesan religious authority, the Vocational Education Committee of the area and the Minister for Education. These schools combine academic and vocational subjects in a wide curriculum and provide continuing educational and vocational guidance for all pupils in their areas. There were in 1975/76 444 full-time comprehensive school teachers.

(d) Community Schools

Community Schools are a recent feature of the Irish educational system. The first three such schools were established in 1972/73 and their numbers have since grown to eighteen in 1975/76. It is intended to build a further number of these schools. Local education authorities contribute part of the cost of building and equipment of these schools but the running costs are provided by the State. The schools are administered by management committees which are representative of the local interests involved. The purpose of these schools is to provide, in the first instance, comprehensive second-level educational facilities in one school for all the children of the area in the second-level

school age range (as in the case of the comprehensive schools) and also to make these facilities available for adult education and community development projects. There were 532 full-time teachers working in community schools in 1975/76.

(e) Regional Technical Colleges

These colleges provide courses of advanced second-level education mainly in technical subjects. In addition there are courses for technicians, part-time and adult courses at second and third level and courses for the education of apprentices to various trades. Courses of university degree standard in certain technological disciplines may also be given in the Regional Technical Colleges, of which there are eight. The total number of full-time vocational teachers (including those in Regional Technical Colleges) employed at the third-level in 1975/76 was 1,163.

4. Universities

There are two universities - the National University of Ireland and the University of Dublin. Both are self-governing institutions but each receives an annual State grant to meet operational expenses and also grants for capital purposes. The National University of Ireland is organised on a federal basis but the individual colleges enjoy a large measure of autonomy. The three constituent University Colleges are Dublin, Cork and Galway. St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, an ecclesiastical college which now admits lay students, is a recognised college (as distinct from a constituent college) of the University; and in 1975 the National University granted recognised college status to Colleges of Education for the training

of primary teachers. The University of Dublin consists of one college - Trinity College, Dublin. A National Institute of Higher Education at Limerick provides degree and diploma courses in certain special disciplines and a similar Institute has recently been established in Dublin but is not, as yet, operational.

5. Second-Level Education

In July 1970 an Act was passed to enable Vocational Education Committees to co-operate with the managers of voluntary secondary schools in the matter of providing second-level education.

During recent years the emphasis in second-level education has been on the provision of a broad curriculum in each school centre and on the correction of an imbalance between the numbers of pupils receiving an academic type education and those receiving an education with a technical bias. Notable progress has been made in this direction and, in addition, a number of State Comprehensive and Community Schools have been established. The ultimate aim of this important aspect of educational development at second level is to ensure, insofar as demographic and other considerations will permit, that all young people will have an opportunity of following an educational course at second level suited to their individual aptitudes and abilities. To achieve this, schools must be sufficiently large to provide comprehensive curricula. The establishment of the Comprehensive schools and the Community Schools, already referred to, and the encouragement given to existing schools in proximity to each other to pool their resources so that pupils may have an opportunity of following a broader curriculum than it would be possible to provide in any one of the schools, are

among the main features of this policy of providing equality of educational opportunity at second level. In conjunction with these activities a nation-wide system of free school transport has been instituted, and educational psychology services, with guidance teachers in the schools, have been established and rapidly expanded.

6. Third-Level Education.

An Act passed in July 1971 set up the Higher Education Authority on a statutory basis. The functions of the Authority are as follows:-

- (a) furthering the development of higher education,
- (b) assisting in the co-ordination of State investment in higher education and preparing proposals for such investment,
- (c) promoting an appreciation of the value of higher education and research,
- (d) promoting the attainment of equality of opportunity in higher education,
- (e) promoting the democratisation of the structure of higher education.

7. Teacher Training

At the request of the Minister for Education the Higher Education Authority prepared a report on teacher training. This report was considered by a Planning Committee set up by the Minister and the recommendation

concerning the Establishment of a Teaching Council has been accepted by him. As an initial step in the revision and improvement of the existing system the training course for Primary teachers has been extended from two to three years, commencing in 1974, and each of the colleges of education has established an arrangement with an appropriate university institution under which trainee teachers follow an approved university course leading to the award of a degree on its successful completion. A new training college, to be known as the Thomond College of Education for teachers specialising in a number of areas including physical education, woodwork, metalwork, rural science, is in course of construction. The first teachers of physical education to train at the college graduated in 1975.

8. Adult Education

A Committee was set up in 1969 to report on the needs of the community in the matter of adult education and to indicate the type of permanent organisation to be set up in order to serve those needs. In April 1970 it presented an Interim Report which drew further submissions and views for consideration for the Committee's Final Report which was published in December, 1973.

The Committee's major recommendations were:-

- (a) the establishment in each area of local administration of a statutory body - the County Education Committee - with responsibility for the development and servicing of all sections of the

educational system, including adult education;

- (b) the appointment of a County Director of Education to serve this Committee and of an Adult Education Officer to look after adult education activities;
- (c) the establishment of Regional Education Committees to administer the provision of non-university third-level education services in their regions and the appointment of Chief Education Officers to serve these committees;
- (d) the creation of Departments of Adult Education and Community Development in third-level institutions;
- (e) the extension of Radio and Television Services in Adult education;
- (f) the provision of a National Learning Resource Centre;
- (g) the recognition of AONTAS (the National Association of Adult Education) as the National Voluntary Advisory Body on Adult Education;
- (h) the establishment of Residential Centres of Adult Education; and
- (i) the provision of a non-residential Trade Union College.

Views have been sought and received from interested organisations and agencies on the Report and are being considered in conjunction with an examination of the Report's proposals. In the meantime, adult education is being developed through the existing agencies, e.g. Vocational Education Committees, Comprehensive and Community Schools, Universities, Voluntary Organisations, etc.

EDUCATIONAL FINANCE

Total State Expenditure

	<u>1974/75</u>	<u>1975 *</u>
	£m.	£m.
Current	985	1,442
Capital	394	544
Total:	<u>1,367</u>	<u>1,986</u>

State Expenditure on Education

Current	135	199
Capital	22	31
	<u>157</u>	<u>230</u>
G.N.P.	£2,915m.	£3,685m.

State Educational Expenditure as percentage of total State Expenditure

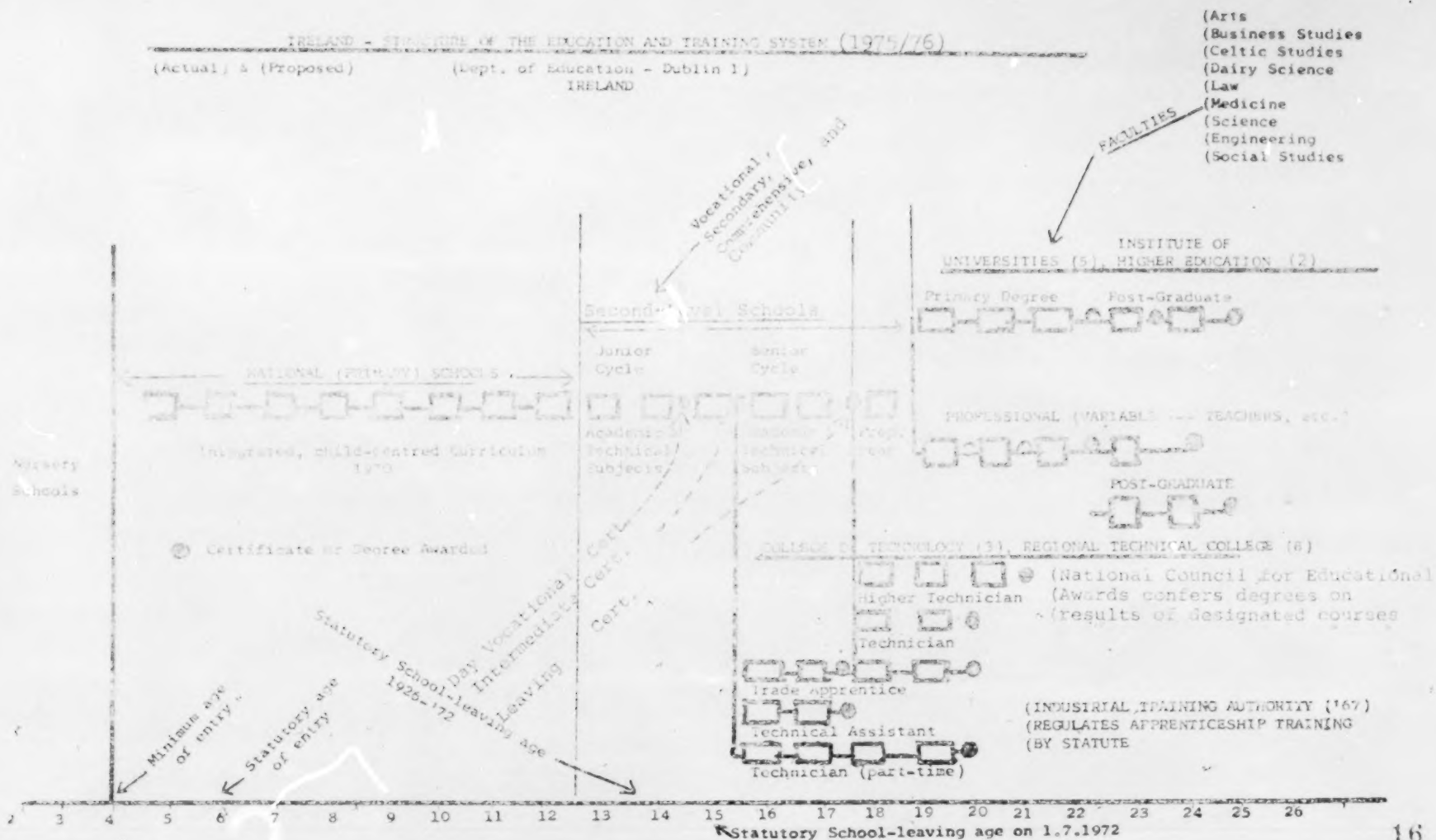
	<u>1974/75</u>	<u>1975 *</u>
Current only	13.7%	13.8%
Total	11.5%	11.6%

State Educational Expenditure (current) as percentage of G.N.P.

<u>1974/75</u>	<u>1975 *</u>
4.6%	5.4%

* Calender year

IRELAND - STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM (1975/76)
(Actual) & (Proposed) (Dept. of Education - Dublin 1)
IRELAND



Major Trends in Educational Development
in 1974/75 and 1975/76

Primary Education:

- (1) The progressive reduction of the pupil/teacher ratio in primary schools.
- (2) The development of an effective system of inservice training for primary teachers.
- (3) The need for special measures in schools situated in disadvantaged areas.
- (4) The provision of remedial programmes for children with specific learning difficulties.
- (5) The provision of additional facilities within the normal primary and second-level systems which will enable handicapped children to be integrated successfully into these schools.
- (6) The development and extension of special schools, classes and other schemes for children with severe learning disabilities.

Second-Level Education

- (1) The provision, to the greatest extent possible, of opportunities whereby each student at the second level stage of education may be able to select a curriculum of studies suited to his individual aptitudes and abilities.
- (2) The attainment of a more rational and economic use of resources especially in the areas of lesser population.

Third Level Education

- (1) The development of Regional Technical Colleges.
- (2) The rationalisation of the provision for third level education especially in the Dublin area.

Subsequent to its decisions announced in December 1974 regarding higher education, the Government further announced in July, 1976 that following discussions with interests concerned, it was decided that there should be five Universities in the State, namely,

- (a) a university to be constituted from the present University College, Dublin,
- (b) a university to be constituted from the present University College, Cork,
- (c) a university to be constituted from the present University College, Galway,
- (d) a university to be constituted from the present St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, and
- (e) the University of Dublin (Trinity College).

New Orientations

Primary Education: Teacher/Pupil Ratio:

Improvement in the teacher/pupil ratio in national schools was effected as from 1 July 1973 and from 1 July 1974. It is proposed to recruit 600 university graduates in 1977/78 school year for employment as temporary wholetime teachers in national schools. These graduates will help towards alleviating the situation in relation to large classes in some schools, in particular, those in disadvantaged areas.

Inservice Training

Nineteen Teachers' Centres have been established throughout the country and residential courses, generally of a week's duration, were provided in the Colleges of Education and in other institutions during the Summer of 1976. A cadre of selected teachers was thus formed to aid in the inservice training process.

Special Education

- (1) Developments emphasised the provision of facilities for mildly mentally-handicapped children through the establishment of special classes in ordinary schools - thus the number of such classes rose from 29 in 1972/73 to 133 in 1975/76.
- (2) The research report on a special educational project for disadvantaged children in Dublin confirmed the value of a structured approach to curriculum and the development of home/school links.
- (3) Increases in level of special education services are indicated in the following table:

SPECIAL EDUCATION INCREASES FROM 3/73 - 6/76

Type of School	3/73			6/76		
	No. of Schools	No. of Teachers	Total average enrol. for quarter ended 31/3/73	No. of schools	No. of Teachers	Total average enrol for quarter ended 30/6/76
1. <u>Blind & Partially Sighted</u>	2	16	150	2	20	145

3/73

3/76

Type of School	No. of Schools	No. of Teachers	Total average enrol. for quarter ended 31/3/73	No. of Schools	No. of Teachers	Total average enrol. for quarter ended 30/6/76
<u>Hearing Impaired</u>						
(a) Schools	4	99	768	4	140	774
(b) Visiting Teachers Service	-	3	-	-	11	-
(c) Classes for dually/multiply handicapped	-	-	-	-	3	12
<u>Mentally Handicapped- Mild</u>						
(a) Schools	26	182	2,815	30	239	3,260
(b) Classes catering almost exclusively for mild mental handicap	29	29	-	93	133	1,319
<u>Mentally Handicapped Moderate</u>						
(a) Schools	24	125	1,636	30	163	1,856
(b) Units attached to other type schools	3	6	90	4	11	94
(c) Voluntary Schools	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Physically Handicapped</u>						
(a) Hospitals	12	33	462	12	26	376
(b) Other	4	21	254	4	26	322
(c) Schemes in Compre- hensive/Community Schools	1	1	20	3	3	46
<u>Emotionally Disturbed</u>	8	26	233	11	44	325
<u>Specific Reading Disability</u>	-	-	-	1	3	23
<u>Deviant Boys</u>	5	23	202	3	24	188
<u>Itinerants</u>	1	4	71	1	4	43

Publications:

- (1) Inter-Departmental Committee on Mentally-ill and Maladjusted Persons - first and second interim reports, 1974 (Dublin: Stationery Office).
- (2) Task Force on Child Care Services interim report, 1975 (Dublin: Stationery Office).
- (3) The Evaluation of an intervention programme for Disadvantaged Children, T. Kellaghan (London NFER).

Educational Innovations

- (1) The new curriculum for primary schools, introduced formally in 1971, is now emerging from the experimental stage in the schools.
- (2) The provision of Teachers' Centres was begun in 1972. Nineteen such Centres have been established and arrangements are in train for the setting up of other centres in 1977.
- (3) The recruitment of mature students to the primary teaching profession, begun in 1972, as an experimental measure, has proved to be very satisfactory and the reservation of a proportion of the trainee-teacher vacancies for such mature students has become a normal feature of primary teacher recruitment.
- (4) There has been a steady development of remedial teaching facilities in large primary schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas.
- (5) A Visiting Teacher Service for hearing impaired children has been provided and an Advisory Committee on the Education of Impaired Hearing Children has been established.

- (6) A Committee has been appointed to produce a Curriculum Guide for schools for moderately mentally handicapped children.
- (7) A trial scheme has been initiated for the integration of physically handicapped children into Ballymun Comprehensive School in Dublin.
- (8) A home-teaching scheme for physically handicapped children is being developed providing either basic education for home-bound children or supplementary remedial education for physically handicapped children attending ordinary schools.
- (9) A small school to cater for children with specific reading disabilities has been established on a trial basis.
- (10) Modern special schools are being provided which present a programme of education training and therapy for delinquent children.
- (11) Boards of management in primary schools were established in 1975 to cater for greater local participation, including parent and teacher representation, in the general administration of the schools.
- (12) Extended participation in the management of Vocational Schools was introduced in October, 1974 by the establishment of School Boards of Management with provision in the composition of each school Board of Management so devised as to give representation to the school authority, to parents of pupils attending the

school and to the teaching staff.

- (13) Financial assistance to third level students is being developed by further improvements made in the scholarships and grants schemes.
- (14) A "transition" year has been introduced in secondary schools. The "transition" year operates on a pilot scheme basis in a number of schools. The "transition year" occurs midway in the second level education course and offers the student who has completed the intermediate certificate programme the opportunity to engage on educational pursuits outside the examination subjects syllabus of the leaving certificate programme.
- (15) Subsequent to its decisions announced in December, 1974 regarding the re-organisation of third-level education involving the Universities and other institutes of higher education, the Government further announced in July, 1976 that following discussions with interests concerned, it was decided that there should be five Universities in the State, namely,
 - (a) a university to be constituted from the present University College, Dublin,
 - (b) a university to be constituted from the present University College, Cork,
 - (c) a university to be constituted from the present University College, Galway,
 - (d) a university to be constituted from the present St. Patrick's College, Maynooth and
 - (e) the University of Dublin (Trinity College).

Educational Research

The establishment in 1972 of the Linguistic Institute of Ireland ensures that all research into language teaching in the schools is carried out by a single institution. The Institute is currently financed at the rate of £140,000 per annum.

Educational Research is also catered for through the following channels:-

- (a) The Educational Research Centre, St. Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra, Dublin
- (b) A special budget administered by the Department which grants aid to particular projects.
- (c) Projects financed through the regular budget, especially certain innovative projects directed towards pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.